

MARIN ART AND GARDEN CENTER
30 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard
Ross
Marin County
California

HALS CA-18
CA-18

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

MARIN ART AND GARDEN CENTER

HALS NO. CA-18

Location: 30 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Ross, Marin County, CA
Lat: 37.96479 Long: -122.55602

Significance: The Marin Art and Garden Center is significant because of its association with James Ross who founded the Town of Ross in Marin County and also for its association with Caroline Livermore who founded the Marin Conservation League, inspired the county's first general plan and advocated for the preservation of thousands of acres of state park land in Marin County. The garden may also be significant for its aesthetic value.

History: The Marin Art and Garden Center got its start in the 1940s when Caroline Livermore, founder of the Marin Conservation League and Gladys Smith started a campaign to raise funds to purchase the property and establish a self-supporting arts and crafts league modeled on the Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park.

Originally the property was part of "Rancho Punta de Quentin". James Ross, for whom the town is named, purchased the property and settled there in 1857. He named the property 'Sunnyside'. Ross came to California from Scotland in 1849 in search of gold but made his fortune in real estate instead. When Ross died the property went to his daughter Annie who married George Worn. In 1870, the Worn family traveled to Europe and acquired many of the shrubs growing on the property today.

The Worns sold the property to Jonathan Kittle in 1882. The Kittles occupied the property for 50 years and in the 1930s the property was engulfed in flames. The property lay idle until after World War II when Caroline Livermore became interested in the property and led her successful effort to create the Garden Center.

Today the garden is a collection of gardens and many rentable venues for community activities. Specialty gardens include: Butterfly Habitat Garden, Channel Island Garden, Memory Garden, Native Basketry Garden, Native Medicinal Garden, Rose Garden, Succulent Garden, Composting Site, a Riparian restoration area and a plant nursery.

Sources: Marin Art and Garden Center website. www.magc.org/about/history.html

Marin Magazine, www.marinmagazine.com/Marin-Magazine/May-2008/The-Marin-Art-and-Garden-Center/

Site visit by Chris Pattillo on January 11, 2009

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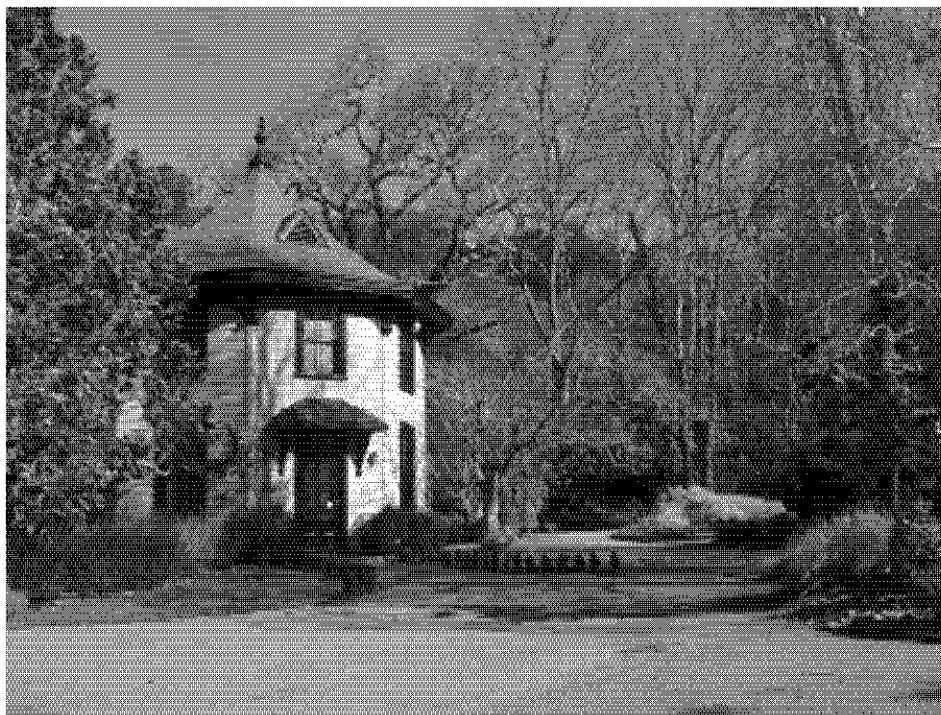


Figure 1. Octagon house that George and Annie Worn lived in while their home was being constructed (Chris Pattillo, January 11, 2009). Today the water tower/cottage houses history, art and botany books.



Figure 2. A serpentine, brick wall separates the property from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (Chris Pattillo, January 11, 2009).